

Lha's Annual Report 2013

A Summary

Season's Greetings from Lha Charitable Trust

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Lha's primary goal is to provide meaningful, multi-leveled social services in Dharamsala, to help ease the transition for the Tibetan refugee community. On a daily basis, Lha serves over 150 people, hosts between 15 to 25 volunteers, and provides approximately 20 different kinds of services, including language education, computer courses, vocational training, health and environmental education, a Community Soup Kitchen, clean water, medicine, clothing distribution, and a public library. Lha's services are open to Tibetan refugees, as well as the local Indian population, and people from the Himalayan regions. We also provide cultural exchanges for international groups and free coordination for volunteers from around the globe.

Lha works hard to operate with minimum administrative and program costs, to produce the maximum output. Your donations help us to improve and increase our services and projects. One of the many projects that donations in 2013 contributed to, was the installation of five brand new water filtration systems in five schools, serving around 2000 people who are now using pure clean water for both their drinking and cooking needs. In addition, donations helped support Lha's Soup Kitchen, to bring healthy food to those in need. The kitchen serves 40-50 financially disadvantaged people daily and 168 needy people since its inception. We also organized nine cultural exchange groups, in collaboration with international institutions, and a total of 120 students participated in this program. On a different note, we would like to announce that from 2014 onwards, the Lha Tibet Fair Trade (LTFT) company will be open for business. LTFT is a registered company undertaken by the Lha Charitable Trust, with headquarters in Dharamsala, India. It aims to improve the standards of living for Tibetan refugees in the Himalayan regions, by means of helping them to generate income, while also ensuring that Lha remains an economically sustainable organization in the future.

Lha is also proud to announce that *Contact Magazine* is now registered under the Registrar Office of the Newspaper, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting Government of India. Recognized by Lonely Planet and other international travel resources, *Contact* has been a very popular, free publication for Tibetan issues and community information in Dharamsala for over 15 years. It is one of the longest-running Tibetan publications in the area, and provides information for local residents, as well as international visitors. Please read more about *Contact Magazine*.

Starting from January 2014, we will also be extending our successful eye-care and dental programs from adults in the community to school children, as we have found this is a much needed area of expansion.

The donations from volunteers and exchange groups staying in Lha's accommodations have allowed Lha to become more self-sufficient and sustainable – our Language, Computer Classes, and other daily social services are now able to continue to be provided regardless of outside funding. However, to keep up with the growing needs of the community, and to maintain the operation of our other social services and special projects such as the soup kitchen, eye, dental & health care, clean water, environmental initiatives, and *Contact Magazine*, we continue to rely on your generous donations.

Since Lha's founding in 1997, we have continued to be inspired by the compassion, dedication and contributions of generous supporters, and thousands volunteers from around the globe.

With your generous support, we hope to continue providing these invaluable services to the local community, and engage in many new initiatives in the coming year. Please follow the links below for more details, updated reports and news. Should you like to read the latest updates from 2013, you can locate them on Lha's website.

Below are some quick facts about Lha's successes during 2013, and we hope for continued success in 2014! Thank you once again for your unwavering support; we could not have achieved these things without you, the volunteers, and of course the dedication of the students and the community.

Important Initiatives, Report for 2013

- 3120 students attended language classes on a monthly basis
- 806 new students enrolled for language classes
- 234 students attended Beginner and Intermediate computer classes
- Over 1766 free articles of clothing distributed to both the Tibetan and local Indian communities
- 40-50 financially disadvantaged people ate daily at the Lha community kitchen, which provides clean water and nutritious meals.
- 108 Tibetan refugees received free eye examinations, and 80 were provided with free glasses
- Organized a mass clean-up program in McLeod Ganj alongside the Tibetan Settlement office
- Provided recommendation letters for 204 students. The Indian Government requires letters from an educational institution as proof from newly arrived refugees that have registered as relocating to India for educational opportunities
- Worked with 619 new volunteers, who donated their valuable time and energy
- Organized Cultural Exchange Programs for 9 University and High School Groups from the USA, France and Mexico, with 120 participants
- Held free acupuncture treatment at Jampaling elder peoples home
- Organized massage therapy training
- 8400 free copies of *Contact Magazine* distributed and published (700-1000 copies published every month).
- Installation of five brand new water filtration systems in five schools, serving around 2000 people with pure clean water for their both drinking and cooking needs.

Quick Facts From 2003 to 2013

- Over 5,807 volunteers from 40 different countries have contributed to Lha's work.
- Approximately 909 students from international education institutes participated in the organized cultural exchange program
- 33,000 free books distributed to Tibetan and local Indian schools and libraries
- More than 30,779 articles of clothing were collected and distributed through the donation center
- 9,525 students have benefited from our language courses
- 2,556 students have benefited from our computer and IT workshops
- 296 free eye check-ups and glasses provided for more than 226 people
- 169 people have graduated from Lha's massage course
- 67 people have graduated from Lha's photography course
- The Lha Community Soup Kitchen has fed between 40-50 financially disadvantaged people daily, and 168 have benefited since its opening in July, 2011
- Installation of nine brand new water filtration systems in nine schools, serving around 4000 people with pure clean water for both their drinking and cooking needs.
- Provided recommendation letters for 368 students. The Indian Government requires letters from an educational institution as proof from newly arrived refugees that have registered as relocating to India for educational opportunities

